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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

June 29, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
The Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Administrator:

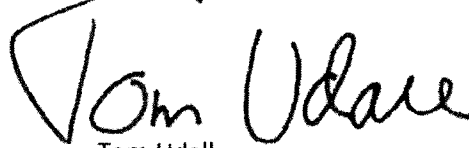
On March 29, you signed an order denying a petition that sought to revoke food tolerances for chlorpyrifos, a pesticide linked to neurodevelopmental disorders in children and acute poisonings of farm workers. Chlorpyrifos has long been of concern to EPA. Residential uses of chlorpyrifos ended in 2000 after EPA found unsafe exposures to children. EPA also discontinued use of chlorpyrifos on tomatoes and restricted its use on apples and grapes in 2000, and obtained no-spray buffers around schools, homes, playfields, day cares, hospitals, and other public places, ranging from 10 to 100 feet.

In 2015, EPA proposed to ban all chlorpyrifos food tolerances, based on unsafe drinking water contamination, which would end use of chlorpyrifos on food in the United States. After updating the risk assessment for chlorpyrifos in November 2016 to protect against prenatal exposures associated with brain impacts, EPA found that expected residues from use on food crops exceeded the safety standard, and additionally the majority of estimated drinking water exposures from currently allowed uses of chlorpyrifos also exceeded acceptable levels, reinforcing the need to revoke all food tolerances for the pesticide.

During our hearing to review the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request for the Environmental Protection Agency, you repeatedly said that you would make a decision on whether or not to regulate chlorpyrifos by October 1st of this year. The EPA website, however, states that EPA "will continue to review the science addressing neurodevelopmental effects and complete our assessment by October 1, 2022." In 1996, Congress unanimously passed the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), which directs the EPA to ensure with "reasonable certainty" that "no harm" will result from food, drinking water, and other exposures to a pesticide. If EPA cannot make this safety finding, it must prohibit residues and use of the pesticide on food. Therefore, EPA should not wait until October 2022, or even October 2017, to revoke food tolerances of chlorpyrifos if there is scientific evidence that shows concerns exist. Delay will only result in additional and unnecessary exposures by farm workers and children who continue to have chlorpyrifos experimented on them while the rest of the scientific community has determined there is reasonable cause for danger.

As such, please provide to the Subcommittee the scientific information presented to you that resulted in your decision to reject the petition to revoke food tolerances of chlorpyrifos. Please also provide the letter from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that you referenced, along with an explanation of why you found their scientific analysis more robust than that of EPA's.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Udall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" and last name "Udall" clearly distinguishable.

Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies